

BOOK REVIEWS

DIE VERWUNDUNGEN DURCH DIE MODERENEN KRIEGSFEUERWAFFEN, IHRE PROGNOSIS UND THERAPIE IN FELDE. By DR. GRAF of Dusseldorf and DR. HILDEBRANDT of Berlin. Volume II, 8½ x 5½, pp. 579; 180 illustrations. Berlin, August Hirselwald, 1907.

The second volume devoted to "Wounds Caused by Modern Firearms" by Drs. Graf and Hildebrandt, has just appeared and is a valuable addition to medical knowledge, especially to military surgeons, since it is devoted primarily to diagnosis and treatment in the field.

Instead of the general discussion of the subject found in the first volume of the work, this portion is devoted to the special consideration of wounds involving different portions of the body.

The statistical research involved in the preparation of this volume must have been enormous, since the results of all the important wars between civilized nations since the Crimean War have been collected and utilized. The Franco-Prussian War, the American Civil War, the Boer War in South Africa and last of all the valuable statistics relative to the Japanese-Russian War have all been drawn upon. In this connection it is interesting to note that the percentages obtained in these various points relative to the parts of the body involved have not varied materially in a half century, and while there is a slight improvement in the mortality attending the treatment of wounded soldiers in the field during that time, the percentage of improvement is not so great as the advances in surgery would have led one to suppose.

The wounds of the head, of the neck, of the face, of the spinal column, of the trunk and of the extremities are the headings of the five main divisions of the book, and each of these is sub-divided into sections devoted to such topics as may properly form chapter headings.

At the beginning of each chapter statistics are given as to the relative frequency in the various wars of the injuries in-

volved, and also tables of comparison showing the results obtained by treatment. These statistical tables while of little value so far as modern therapy is concerned, add greatly to the value of the book as a volume of reference for military surgeons.

Diagnoses of bony injuries and of the exact location of missiles has been materially aided by the use of radiographs, and a larger number of the illustrations used are derived from this source.

The effects produced by the different types of bullets used, varying from the needle-pointed bullet of the modern French rifle to the irregular and destructive missile caused by bursting shell and shrapnel, have all contributed their share to the collection of wounds depicted, and while it has pleased some writers to refer to the small caliber, high power projectiles used in modern infantry rifles as "merciful," the fact remains that the mortality statistics remain high and do not vary materially from those of the time when soft leaden bullets were habitually used in warfare. Indeed, as has been shown in our own city in the past few months, the penetrating power of the modern weapon is so great that a woman stooping over to pick up some kindlings at a distance of over a mile from a rifle range, was struck by a bullet which passed completely through one thigh, completely through one arm and completely through the head, causing six different openings in the body. In the olden time she would have been out of the danger zone in any event, or if by chance she had been nearer the firing point, such a number of wounds would have been improbable.

Among the many cases cited certain ones of course illustrate well the great variety of wounds which are received in an active campaign and the vagaries of a rifle ball in causing injury. In one case, a bullet striking the right collar bone, entered the supra clavicular fossa and remained within the body. The enormous exudate of blood in the right pleural cavity ultimately resulted in a septic thrombosis which so interfered with circulation in the body that the collateral circulation was ultimately established, gave rise to an extraordinary development of the superficial veins of the legs and of the abdominal walls, showing in the interesting photograph presented as large snake-like vessels over the entire anterior surface of the body below the level of the diaphragm.